(d) Does not arise.

Criterion for Allocation of Fair Price Shops

5033. CHAUDHARY HARMOHAN SINGH:
SHRI ISH DUTT YADAV:

Will thle Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to State:

(a) whether Government have advised the States to give special consideration to the applicants belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the allocation of Fair Price Shops; and

(b) if so, what is the Statewise number of persons belonging to Scheduled Castes|Scheduled Tribes, who own Fair Price Shops as on date?

THE MINSTER OF CIVIL SUPPLES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) The operational responsibility for implementation of Public Distribution System (PDS) is that of the State Governments and UT Administrations. Decisions relating to eligibility criteria and allotment of fair price shops, are matters within the administrative jurisdiction of the State Governments|UT Administrations. However, the Central Government has odvised the State Governments|UT Administrations to reserve a percentage of fair price shops for allotment to SC|STs and women. The Central Government does not maintain data on fair price shops earmarked and allocated to SCs|STs.

Decline in availability of quality products

5054. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the availibity of quality products in the country, particularly food items have declined.

(b) if so, whether the Bureau of Indian Standards and other Central agencies have failed to put a check for inferior products;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what concrete measures Government propose to adopt so that only quality products are available in the market?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Bureau of Indian Standards has brought out a very large number of National Standards on the quality of various food products through a consensus process involving various Government and statutory organisation like Directorate General of Health Services. Directorate of Marketing and Inspection and Ministry of Food Processing Industries. These standards also incorporate the mandatory, requirements of the PFA Rules and are by and large harmonized by international standards.

Through BIS Product Certification Marketing Scheme, under which a licence is granted to a food product manufacturer who is able to ensure the conformity of his product to the relevant Indian Stanadrds, the quality of the food products for the consumer is ensured. Also, the food items packed under AGMARK Quality Control Programme are pretested and certified as per notified standards.

(d) While the BIS Product Certification Marketing Scheme is mainly voluntary in nature, for certain products like food colours and food additives, vanaspati, infant milk food, infant formulate and condenced milk, conformity to